

oil shale development could eventually move forward. Instigators of this prohibition want to continue the delay for another year at least.

We have heard claims that the Department is under a frenzied rush to organize a fire sale of development leases. I think it is ridiculous to consider the multiyear oil shale effort as frenzied. The recent efforts started in 2004, and included congressional debate and passage of the 2005 Energy Act, years of planning and years of studies, research and development, and a draft environmental impact statement issued last December. This has not been a frenzied rush and there hasn't been any attempt to organize a fire sale.

When attempting to sensationalize this process, opponents never make it clear we are simply trying to lay the groundwork on how to offer this resource for development. When those who are trying to stop oil shale say we are not ready to move forward with commercial oil shale leasing, and point out that Chevron believes a full-scale commercial leasing program should not proceed, I have to say: True, and completely irrelevant. In that vein, I heard my friend and colleague from Colorado earlier today read excerpts from the BLM draft oil shale regulation report. Quote after quote seemed to suggest that oil shale requires more work, but he did not mention that we aren't even trying to lease yet.

The Secretary of the Interior, a former Member of this body, said this week it would be 2015 before we have a full-scale production. Assistant Secretary Alured said this week that "commercial development of oil shale will not begin until technologically viable."

So the point is we need to have the rules and regulations to get started. Then we can phase in for the development phase. But right now we have stopped everything dead in its tracks. You can't even move forward because of the current policies of this Congress. The fact is the moratorium is, at this point, stopping the way forward whereby industry, local officials, affected communities, and the world market would assess and prepare for the upcoming development of this massive resource.

We are not proposing a full-scale leasing program for this year or this decade. We are not there yet, and the moratorium is not stopping a full-scale commercial leasing program. The reality is it has stopped an administrative process that will allow us to see how our energy resources can be best utilized.

Before I finish here, I feel I must point out how strange it is that developing regulations for oil shale, a technology we have been exploring for decades, can be labeled as unproven and harmful by many of the same people who supported the absurdly complicated, wholly bureaucratic scheme of cap and trade for greenhouse gas

emissions. This straitjacket on the entire U.S. economy would cost billions and billions of dollars and had no workable examples, antecedents, or precedents. Yet allowing western land managers to move forward with the regulations for how to utilize oil shale is too dangerous?

Let me relate to my friends here on the floor an experience I had in the Interior Committee as the top Republican. I worked with the chairman of the Interior Subcommittee on Appropriations. We had a bill put forward and we worked out our differences. It was ready to go—it was yesterday. Then after our meeting, 4 or 5 hours later, maybe 3 hours later, I was notified that we were not going to have any more appropriations this year.

It was not Republicans who were stopping the process in the committee. It was not the Republicans on the House side who stopped the process over there when they tried to propose amendments in their Appropriations Committee to provide more supply.

This issue needs to come to the floor. We need to have open debate. We need to have an opportunity to produce amendments to support supply. It is not Republicans who are stopping the process. I can tell you from personal experience as an appropriator that it was not Republicans who stopped that process in committee. That was a directive that came down from higher up.

I have to say here that what I see happening on the floor today is nothing more than an attempt to confuse the issue, to confuse the listeners to this debate as to how important supply is to the welfare of this country. I think we need to drill more and we need to use less. That would have been reflected in the Republican package of amendments we talked about.

I encourage the Democratic leadership on the floor to rethink their current policies because I think the American people want to see us move forward. They want to see us put partisanship aside. They want to see something done about what they are paying at the gas pump. They are feeling the pain at \$4 a gallon.

Mr. President, I thank you for granting me an opportunity to spout here on the floor, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CYPRUS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on July 20, 1974, Turkish forces invaded Cyprus. The hostilities that followed led to great destruction of life and property. Today, 34 years later, we pause to mourn those who lost their lives.

Sadly, thousands of Turkish troops are still in Cyprus. The island remains divided, with significant distrust between the two sides.

Since 1974, U.N. peacekeeping forces have had to maintain a buffer zone between the Turkish Cypriots in the north and the Greek Cypriots in the south.

But today we have renewed hope for a solution to the Cyprus problem. The new peace process underway there offers the brightest opportunity we have had in many years to reunite the island.

The election of the Greek Cypriot leader Christofias in February helped usher in a new era of opportunity.

Along with his Turkish Cypriot counterpart, Talat, the two sides are making progress to help the United Nations-led negotiations on the future of Cyprus succeed.

I commend both leaders for showing the political will needed to set the stage for a resolution.

The leaders met for the first time on March 21 of this year. Soon after, in a demonstration of goodwill on both sides, they agreed to open a new crossing at Ledra Street in Nicosia.

The leaders are working together to develop a timeline for future negotiations, including another meeting this Friday, on July 25. I urge both parties to demonstrate their commitment to peace negotiations at that time.

I hope the United Nations will continue to play a constructive role in supporting the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders as they find a way forward.

Cyprus's goal is to reunify the island as a bicomunal, bizonal federation. Resolution of the Cyprus problem would untie so many other knots, with implications for Europe and beyond. I encourage both sides to use this moment of opportunity, and continue their important work with the United Nations, to achieve this goal.

FOURTH OF JULY

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article I wrote in response to a request by the Philadelphia Inquirer be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, July 4, 2008]

SALUTING AMERICA, A WORK IN PROGRESS

(The Inquirer asked a group of prominent Philadelphians to share their thoughts about July Fourth and what it means. Here are their responses.)

The values and ideals embodied in the Declaration of Independence have made the United States the envy of the world. Thomas